AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please add new claims 39-51, as follows. This listing replaces all prior listings of the claims.

1-38. (Cancelled)

39. (New) A method of switching packets, comprising:

providing a network switch for switching packets, the network switch comprising (a) a first blade comprising a 10 Gigabits/second first packet processor coupled to a first physical port of the first blade, and a first interface adapter ASIC, (b) a second blade comprising a 10 Gigabits/second second packet processor coupled to a second physical port of the second blade, and a second interface adapter ASIC, and (c) a switch circuit coupled to the first interface adapter ASIC and the second interface adapter ASIC of the first and second blades, respectively, whereby the first and second blades are interconnected through the switch circuit;

receiving a packet at a physical port of the first blade, and providing the packet to the first packet processor;

processing the packet in the first packet processor, and serially outputting from the first packet processor a first data stream comprising bytes of the packet and control information, the control information comprising information identifying the first or second packet processor, the second blade, and a payload state, the first data stream being received at the interface adapter ASIC of the first blade;

serially transmitting a data block from first interface adapter ASIC of the first blade to the switch circuit, the data block comprising bytes of the first data stream and control information comprising an identifier of the second blade and payload state information, wherein the switch circuit switches the first block of data to the second blade based on the second blade identifier information of the data block;

serially receiving the data block at the second blade and storing the data block; and

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reassembling the first data stream at the second blade using the control information of stored data block and serially transmitting the reassembled first data stream to the second packet processor;

reassembling the packet using the reassembled first data streat at the second packet processor for output at the second physical port of the second blade.

40. (New) The method of claim 39, said control information comprising an indicator of a location in the packet

41. (New) The method of claim 39, said control information comprising an indicator of a start of the packet.

42. (New) The method of claim 39, said control information comprising an indicator of an end of the packet.

43. (New) A method of switching packets, comprising:

providing a network switch for switching packets, the network switch comprising a first blade comprising a first packet processor coupled to a first physical port of the first blade, a second blade comprising a second packet processor coupled to a second physical port of the second blade, and a switching fabric comprising a plurality of switch circuits each coupled to the first and second blades, whereby the first and second blades are interconnected through each of the switch circuits;

receiving a packet at a physical port of the first blade, and providing the packet to the first packet processor;

processing the packet in the first packet processor, and serially outputting from the first packet processor a first data stream comprising bytes of the packet and control information, the control information comprising a blade identifier information that identifies at least one of the first and second blades, payload state information, and an identifier of the first packet processor;

serially transmitting a first data block from the first blade to a first one of the switch circuits, the data block comprising bytes of the

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first data stream and control information comprising payload state information and an identifier of the second blade;

serially transmitting a second data block from the first blade to a second one of the switch circuits, the data block comprising different bytes of the first data stream and control information comprising payload state information and an identifier of the second blade;

serially receiving the first and second data blocks at the second blade and storing the first and second data blocks; and

reassembling the first data stream in original order at the second blade using the control information of the stored first and second data blocks and serially transmitting the reassembled first data stream to the second packet processor; and

reassembling the packet using the reassembled first data stream at the second packet processor for output at the second physical port of the second blade.

44.   (New) The method of claim 43, wherein the first packet processor processes the packet at a rate of at least 10 Gigabits/second.

45.   (New) The method of claim 43, wherein said control information of the first and second data blocks comprises an indicator of a location in the packet

46.   (New) The method of claim 43, said control information of the first and second data blocks comprises an indicator of a start of the packet.

47.   (New) The method of claim 43, said control information of the first and second data blocks comprises an indicator of an end of the packet.

48.   (New) The method of claim 43, wherein the blade identifier information of the first and second data blocks as transmitted from the first blade identifies the second blade.

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49.   (New) The method of claim 43, wherein the blade identifier information of the first and second data blocks as received at the second blade identifies the first blade.

50.   (New) The method of claim 43, wherein the first and second data blocks are initial sub-blocks of stripes transmitted simultaneously to the first and second switch circuits, respectively.

51.   (New) The method of claim 43, further comprising modifying the first and second data blocks in the first and second switch circuits, respectively.

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